



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 139 – December 26, 2006

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had an enjoyable and safe holiday and you're ready for all of the new adventures that 2007 will bring. The new year kicked off with a bang in Arizona with two thrillers in the Insight and Fiesta bowls. The Grand Canyon State was center stage as the backdrop for these two amazing football games. The entire state has been abuzz with activity and I'm sure this will continue through next week as Ohio State and Florida fans descend upon Arizona for the first-ever BCS National Championship Game.

On behalf of the entire staff at the Arizona Office of Tourism, I wish all of you an extremely prosperous 2007!

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann Director Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Arizona Game and Fish Department Sponsors "Economic Benefits of Nature" Tourism Workshop

Did you know the total annual economic effect of wildlife viewing in Arizona is \$1.5 billion? That includes more than \$820 million in retail sales. In fact, watchable wildlife recreation generates more than 15,000 full- and part-time jobs in our state. Nature tourism is one of the

fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and watchable wildlife participants in Arizona outnumber the combined populations of Montana and Wyoming. Therefore, the Arizona Game and Fish Department is excited to sponsor "How You and Your Community Can Profit from Nature Tourism." The workshop will be presented by Watchable Wildlife, Inc., a national nonprofit organization that helps communities capitalize on their natural assets to improve the local economy. Topics of the workshop will include: the impact nature tourism has on state and local economies; how to promote wildlife tourism and build community support; and how to build a planning team to ensure successful implementation of nature tourism efforts. The clinic has been conducted from Iowa to Russia with positive results. For more information, contact Joe Yarchin at (602) 789-3589 or via email at jyarchin@azgfd.gov.

When: January 26, 2007, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Where: La Quinta Inn, 2510 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85023

Cost: \$35 includes materials, snacks and lunch

Maximum attendance: 50 people

Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) FY 2008 Certification Workshops – SAVE the DATE

The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to present our FY 2008 Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) Certification workshops. TEAM workshops are designed to provide comprehensive information on AOT's matching grant program and the applications process. To further assist communities and organization with their tourism planning and development, this year's workshop will also include information on how to develop a marketing plan. AOT offers the opportunity to attend a workshop in one of five Arizona communities: Phoenix, Sierra Vista, Kingman, Flagstaff, and Show Low. Workshop attendance is mandatory for those organizations who wish to apply for matching grant funding for FY 2008. To RSVP for a workshop, please contact Sarah Martins at 602-364-3687 or via email at smartins@azot.gov. Please see below dates and locations, more information to follow.

Phoenix

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Sierra Vista

Thursday, February 15, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Kingman

Tuesday, February 20, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Flagstaff

Thursday, February 22, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Show Low

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Industry News

Nine Months Inbound Travel Up Almost 5 percent; W. Europe Down

The number of inbound visitors to the U.S. rose 4.9% to nearly 33 million in the first nine months this year from the same 2005 period, according to the Commerce Department's Office of Travel & Tourism Industries. The September gain was almost 6%. In the first three quarters, traffic from Canada rose 6.8% to 12.6 million visitors, Mexico jumped 27.5% to 4.14 million while overseas numbers fell one percent to 16.15 million. Of those, the number of visitors from Western Europe dropped 3.6% to 7.1 million. In September, the overseas count fell 1.4% while Western European inbound was off 1.5%. The fall-off from Europe continues "the trend of monthly declines" for most of 2006, said OTTI without further explanation. (*Special to TA*)

Save Americans Fancy Themselves as Grand Innovators

But when it comes to vacation preferences, the same destinations pop up with the regularity of midwinter flight delays in Chicago, says USA Today. For example, a recent survey of Carlson Wagonlit Travel agents found that Las Vegas, Orlando and Honolulu topped the list of domestic destinations for 2007, which was a minor detour from 2005 and 2006 top draws, when Maui ranked third, followed by Honolulu. Domestic bookings at American Express Travel tell a similar story. But internationally, new destinations such as India, South Africa and Hong Kong are showing up with increased frequency. (*Page 1D, USA Today*)

Save the Date: Arizona Tourism Unity Dinner Wednesday, March 28, 2007, 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The Arizona Tourism Alliance will host the 3rd Annual Arizona Tourism Unity dinner in Phoenix on Wednesday, March 28, 2007 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa's Frank Lloyd Wright Ballroom from 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. This elegant evening will bring together both public and private sector organizations statewide to celebrate unity within the tourism industry and honor individuals for their extraordinary support and service to Arizona's travel and tourism industry. The night will start off with a reception and silent auction from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The dinner and program will begin at 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendars and join in this valuable opportunity to celebrate our support for Arizona tourism and its leaders. For more information on sponsorship opportunities and guidelines for silent auction donations, visit http://aztourismalliance.org/uni_events.htm#Unity.

Goodbye Mickey, Hello River Rafting

AARP magazine takes readers on tours with two sets of grandparents and their grandchildren, shunning "Mickey Mouse and the beach" for adventure vacations. The first are the Caudrados and their three grandchildren who tackle the white water of Utah's Yampa River with tour operator OARS (Outdoor Adventure River Sports). The second group consists of Joe Mann and his granddaughter who explore the Maine coast on a six-day multisport trip of biking, hiking and kayaking through operator Backroads. Also in this issue: four hotels where visitors can view modern art, old masterpieces and folk art. They are 21c Museum Hotel, Louisville, The Phoenician, Scottsdale, Ariz., Mauna Kea Resort, Hawaii and Sonesta Hotels & Resorts. (*Pages 74, 14, AARP magazine, Jan/Feb. 2007*)